



March 10, 2022

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Arvind Shaw, CEO for Generations Family Health Center, a rural FQHC that serves 18,500 patients in the Putnam, Danielson, Norwich and Willimantic communities. I am in support of S.B.284: "AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS."

I am very grateful to the legislature for expanding access from 0-8 last year and now by expanding coverage to 18 years will have a significant impact on the health equity of patients.

- We will have UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE for all kids up to 18 years old.
- it will ensure that children will not age out of coverage when they turn 9.
- Expanding eligibility will help equalize access to health care coverage and reduce the uninsured in Connecticut.
- It will improve the life expectancy through health equity for essential workers on our frontlines.

I am a resident from Eastford, and I am documented, but we used to be uninsured as most of us are when we first arrive to this country. Insurance is not essential if you are healthy, however due to hesitancy in using the medical system for routine health care immigrants find out quickly that their children are falling behind in their immunizations and now have hurdles to attend school, and continue to lag behind in other healthcare outcomes as we age.

The care for the uninsured depends on a safety net that has been only partially funded for decades. Patients delays and reluctance to access treatment reduces choices for patients and often results in patients being treated in the wrong place and the wrong time and at the highest cost in the healthcare spectrum and with the worst possible outcomes.

I see this bill as leveling the playing field for children by providing equal access to timely health care services that are also preventative in nature. I see this bill as also providing our safety net providers with additional funding so that the care that is being sought is coming from the communities in which the patients reside providing local solutions. Health care access is an essential piece of health equity.

Thank you for allowing me to tell you why I think a healthy safety net is important for all of us.

Arvind Shaw,
CEO

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